

Message Text

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ACTION PA-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4918
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: OVIP (CHRISTOPHER, WARREN)
SUBJ: TRANSCRIPT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 165061

STATE FOR VANCE, S/PRS, PA; DEPT PASS NSC FOR DR
BRZEZINSKI, USIA FOR J THURBER IOP/G, WHITE HOUSE FOR
MR POWELL AND MR SCHECHTER; AMEMBASSY BANGKOK FOR
DEPUTY SECRETARY'S PARTY

FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S
PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN NEW DEHI ON JULY 23:

PRESS: WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE AN OPENING STATEMENT?

CHRISTOPHER: NO, I WILL JUST TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

PRESS: WHAT DID YOU DISCUSS WITH THE FINANCE MINISTER?
ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSALS?

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CHRISTOPHER: I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T HEAR YOUR QUESTION.

PRESS: YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FINANCE MINISTER,
MR PATEL.

CHRISTOPHER: I HAD A RATHER BRIEF DISCUSSION WITH THE
FINANCE MINISTER LATE THIS AFTERNOON. WE DISCUSSED THE

POSSIBILITY OF BILATERAL AID. WE DISCUSSED QUESTIONS OF AID FROM MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS TO INDIA. WE DISCUSSED THE CONDITION OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY AND HOW OUR PRODUCTION IS GOING THIS YEAR. HE TOLD ME SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR CROPS IN INDIA. I MET WITH MR PATEL IN WASHINGTON ABOUT A MONTH AGO, AND WE WERE SIMPLY RENEWING THAT FRIENDSHIP AND HAD A RELATIVELY BRIEF DISCUSSION.

PRESS: YOU SAY PROSPECTS OF BILATERAL AID, THEN THIS PARTICULAR POINT--WHAT WAS THE UNDERSTANDING--WHEN IS IT LIKELY TO BE RESUMED?

CHRISTOPHER: WE'VE INDICATED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO START THOSE DISCUSSIONS WHATEVER THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT IS READY TO DO SO. WE HAVE NOT FIXED ANY TIME FRAME OR SET ANY SPECIFIC DEADLINES. THIS IS, OF COURSE, A NEW GOVERNMENT THAT IS IN THE PROCESS OF FORMING ITS POLICIES AND DEVELOPING ITS PROCEDURES, AND WE SIMPLY INDICATED THAT WE ARE READY TO TALK WHENEVER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IS.

PRESS: ARE THEY INTERESTED IN AID OR ARE THEY NOT?

CHRISTOPHER: WE DIDN'T GET THAT FAR, BUT I GATHERED FROM MR PATEL THAT HE EXPECTED THAT AT SOME POINT IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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RELATIVELY NEAR FUTURE, WITHOUT ANY TIME DEADLINE FIXED THERE WOULD BE CONVERSATIONS ALONG THOSE LINES.

PRESS: WAS THERE ANY PROVISION MADE IN THE FOREIGN AID BILL BEFORE THE CONGRESS ON -- FOR INDIA -- AND IF SO, HOW MUCH, WHAT WAS THE AMOUNT?

CHRISTOPHER: MY UNDERSTANDING OF THAT, AND SOMEONE CAN CHECK ME ON IT, IS THAT THE CONGRESS HAS MADE TENTATIVE PROVISIONS FOR \$60 MILLION IN BILATERAL AID, BUT THAT'S SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATIONS AND CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. THAT WOULD BE AS I UNDERSTAND IT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1978.

PRESS: HAS THE APPROPRIATION BILL GONE THROUGH?

CHRISTOPHER: MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE APPROPRIATION BILL HAS NOT BEEN FINALIZED, IT'S NOT BEEN FINALLY APPROVED.

PRESS: DID YOU SAY \$60 MILLION DOLLARS?

CHRISTOPHER: SIXTY IS MY RECOLLECTION, IF ANYBODY CAN DETERMINE IF THAT'S CORRECT. AS YOU PERHAPS KNOW, I MET EARLIER TODAY WITH A NUMBER OF OFFICIALS IN YOUR FOREIGN MINISTRY MR VAJAPYEE AND MR MEHTA. AND THEN, THE FIRST THING THIS MORNING I HAD A CONVERSATION WITH MR SHANKAR, THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

PRESS: IN YOUR TALKS WITH MR VAJPAYEE -- AFTER YOUR TALKS WITH MR VAJPAYEE, WHERE YOU MUST HAVE COVERED THE BILATERAL RELATIONS, WHAT DO YOU FORESEE IS THE FUTURE OF INDO-US RELATIONS IN THE NEW CONTEXT?

CHRISTOPHER: WELL, MR VAJPAYEE WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO GIVE A LUNCH FOR ME TODAY AND SO WE HAD SEVERAL HOURS TOGETHER, UNCLASSIFIED

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BOTH IMMEDIATELY BEFORE LUNCH, AFTER LUNCH, AND THEN FROM APPROXIMATELY 3:00 UNTIL 5:00 O'CLOCK. SO WE HAD A GOOD CHANCE TO DISCUSS A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS. I CONVEYED TO HIM HOW PLEASED PRESIDENT CARTER IS, AND HOW PLEASED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE WITH THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE OF INDIA WERE ABLE TO HOLD A FREE ELECTION AND THAT DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES WORKED IN THIS COUNTRY. I INDICATED THAT BASED UPON THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN YOUR PRIME MINISTER AND OUR PRESIDENT, AS WELL AS THE CONVERSATIONS THAT I HAVE HAD WITH INDIAN LEADERS AND SECRETARY VANCE HAS HAD WITH INDIAN LEADERS, WE FEEL THAT WE'RE ON THE VERGE OF A NEW ERA OF CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH INDIA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT TO ENHANCE THE LONGSTANDING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, WE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF TOPICS. I WOULD SAY THE CENTRAL THEME THAT DOMINATED THE DISCUSSION, AS FAR AS I WAS CONCERNED, BEGAN WITH AN APPRAISAL OF THE MORAL VALUES THAT WE SHARE WITH INDIA BECAUSE OF THE HISTORY THAT IS SO INDELIBLY WRITTEN WITH RESPECT TO BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES. AND ON THE BASIS OF THAT FOUNDATION WE TURNED TO WAYS OUR TWO COUNTRIES MIGHT PUT INTO ACTION THE MORAL VALUES WHICH ARE SO MUCH A PART OF THE FABRIC OF OUR COUNTRIES.

IN THAT CONNECTION I INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S INITIATIVE IN THIS FIELD COVERED A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT TOPICS. IT IS AN EFFORT TO PUT THESE MORAL VALUES INTO PRACTICE THAT UNDERGIRDS THE PRESIDENT'S ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE A STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY WHICH WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS, RATHER THAN SIMPLY A RATIFICATION OF EXISTING LEVELS. IT'S ONCE AGAIN AN ATTEMPT TO PUT THESE VALUES INTO PRACTICE THAT HAS RESULTED IN THE UNITED STATES' EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS WHICH IT IS SELLING UNCLASSIFIED

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ABROAD, HOPING TO MAKE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST ARMS SALES
RATHER THAN A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOR OF ARMS SALES, AND
TRYING TO AVOID THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES
INTO AREAS WHERE THEY DON'T EXIST.

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THIS SAME SET OF MORAL VALUES UNDERGIRDS OUR HOPE THAT

IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE THE RESOURCES OF THE
DEVELOPED OR INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES CAN BE MADE AVAIL-
ABLE TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

IT IS THE SAME SET OF MORAL VALUES WHICH I THINK IS
THE PRINCIPAL THEME OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE.

AND THESE SUBJECTS WERE COVERED IN A GOOD DEAL OF OUR
CONVERSATION TODAY.

IN ADDITION TO THAT, WE TOURED THE INTERNATIONAL HORIZON,
DISCUSSING VARIOUS TROBLED SPOTS AROUND THE WORLD AND
EXCHANGING VIEWS AND INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO THEM.
I'LL STOP THERE. I DON'T WANT TO MAKE THIS A MONOLOGUE.

PRESS: DID THE PROLIFERATION ISSUE ARISE AT ALL IN THE
COURSE OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ANY OF THE INDIAN LEADERS?

CHRISTOPHER: YES, I DISCUSSED THE PROLIFERATION ISSUE
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WITH BOTH MR VALJPYEE AND MR MEHTA. I INDICATED TO
THEM THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S DETERMINATION TO PREVENT
THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES AND NUCLEAR
EXPLOSIVE TECHNOLOGIES WAS A POLICY THAT WAS NOT
DESIGNED FOR APPLICATION TO ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY,
CERTAINLY NOT ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR INDIA, BUT ON
THE CONTRARY WAS A POLICY OF WORLDWIDE APPLICATION
BECAUSE OF HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR
EXPLOSIVES.

I INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS FULLY AWARE OF THE
NEED OF SO MANY COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, INCLUDING THE
UNITED STATES, TO HAVE THE ADVANTAGES OF NUCLEAR POWER
AND THE CHALLENGE OF THIS DECADE IS TO FIND A WAY TO GET
THE ADVANTAGES OF NUCLEAR POWER WITHOUT THE TREMENDOUS
RISKS INHERENT IN THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR EXPLO-
SIVES. AS YOU PERHAPS ALL KNOW, A TEAM FROM THE UNITED
STATES UNDER JOSEPH NYE IS COMING HERE TO HAVE MORE
EXPLICIT DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWING ON THE DECISION OF THE
UNITED STATES TO FURNISH NUCLEAR FUEL FOR THE TARAPUR
REACTOR.

PRESS: THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA RECENTLY MADE A
STATEMENT ABOUT THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND INDIA ON PEACEFUL PROLIFERA-
TION. ON THE BASIS OF THAT STATEMENT, DO YOU THINK IT
WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR INDIA TO BUY ITEMS ON THE ANDGER LIST
OF SENSITIVE FUELS AND EQUIPMENT ...?

CHRISTOPHER: WELL, WE HAVE SEEN PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S
STATEMENT AND WE ACCEPT IT AT FACE VALUE AND FULLY TRUST
IT. WE THINK THAT IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT STEP IN THE
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION, AS I
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SAID, WE HAVE AGREED TO FURNISH FUEL FOR THE TARAPUR
REACTOR. AS FAR AS THE SPECIFIC ITEMS ON THE LIST AND
WHAT MIGHT BE FURNISHED IN THE FUTURE, THAT WILL BE THE
SUBJECT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL START WITHIN A
WEEK OR SO IN WHICH OUR TEAM WILL BE LED BY JOSEPH NYE,

WHO IS A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN SPECIALIST IN THIS FIELD. BUT I WOULD HAVE TO SAY THAT THOSE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE MUCH HIGHER PROMISE OF SUCCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE VERY FORTHCOMING STATEMENTS BY PRIME MINISTER DESAI.

PRESS: DID YOU DISCUSS THE INDIAN OCEAN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS -- CONCERNING THE SOVIET UNION?

CHRISTOPHER: YES, WE DID DISCUSS THE INDIAN OCEAN. I INDICATED THAT THE INITIAL AIM OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO INSURE THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN DOES NOT BECOME A THEATRE OR ARENA FOR MILITARY COMPETITION BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES. WE HAVE HAD ONE MEETING WITH THE SOVIETS ON THIS SUBJECT AND ARE PLANNING TO HAVE ANOTHER ONE WITHIN ABOUT A MONTH. THE FIRST ENDEAVOR WILL BE TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF MILITARY ACTIVITIES OF BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON THAT SUBJECT AND HOPEFULLY TO STABILIZE THE COMPETITION AT THAT LEVEL. THEN WE WOULD HOPE TO MOVE FORWARD TO REDUCTIONS IN THE DEGREE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, LOOKING TOWARD A LIMITATION OF MILITARY ACTIVITIES BY THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. I WOULD WANT TO CAUTION THAT IT IS TOO EARLY IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS TO BE ABLE TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF THEM BUT IT IS A GOOD SIGN THAT THEY ARE STARTED.

PRESS: EXCUSE ME. YOU MENTIONED STABILIZING AT THAT LEVEL -- DOES IT MEAN THAT THE NUMBER OF VESSELS WHICH WILL BE CRUISING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN FOR BOTH SIDES?

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CHRISTOPHER: WELL, ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT WE'LL HAVE TO EARLY CONFRONT IS HOW TO DETERMINE WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS ON BOTH SIDES ARE DETERMINING WHAT WILL BE THE RIGHT WAY TO MEASURE LEVEL OF ACTIVITIES. WILL IT BE SHIPS DAYS OR WILL IT BE SHIP TON DAYS? WILL IT RELATE TO THE NUMBER OF BASES? HOW DO YOU DEFINE THE INDIAN OCEAN? WHAT ABOUT BASES ON THE PERIMETERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN? THESE ARE THE KINDS OF TECHNICAL QUESTIONS THAT HAVE TO BE CONFRONTED WITH GREAT CARE AND GREAT PRECISION WHEN YOU GET INTO TALKS REGARDING ARMS LIMITATION, BUT THAT'S THE TUFF OF WHICH ARMS LIMITATION IS MADE AND IT'S WHY THOSE SUBJECTS ARE NOT DONE IN A DAY.

PRESS: HAVE THE SOVIETS AGREED TO PROCEED ON THIS BASIS?

CHRISTOPHER: THE SOVIETS HAVE AGREED TO HAVE AOTHER

MEETING.

PRESS: ANOTHER MEETING. WELL, DID YOU GET ANY IDEA OF WHAT VIEW THE INDIAN LEADERS TAKE OF THIS NEW NEUTRON BOMB DEVICE?

CHRISTOHER; THAT SUBJECT DID NOT COME UPI IN OUR DISCUSSION TODAY.

PRESS: YOU MENTIONED CLOSE RELATIONS WITH INDIA. WHAT ARE THE PRIORITY ITEMS IN DEVELOPING THESE CLOSE RELATIONS?

CHRISTOPHER: I THINK WE EXPECT TO SEE INDIA TAKE A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP IN SOUTH ASIA WHICH IS REFLECTIVE OF THE SIZE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE COUNTRY AND THE QUALITY OF UNCLASSIFIED

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ITS LEADERSHIP. WE BELIEVE THAT INDIA CAN HAVE A BENIGN INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ENTIRE SUBCONTINENT AND I WOULD WANT TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT WE CAN WORK WITH INDIA WHERE IT IS PROPER TO THAT END.

WE ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH INDIA IN THE VARIOUS MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE WORLD BANK. WE DO NOT HAVE ANY SEVERE OUTSTANDING BILATERAL PROBLEMS AND SO TODAY'S MEETING WAS SIMPLY TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR OUR CAPACITY TO WORK TOGETHER AS PROBLEMS ARISE AROUND THE WORLD.

PRESS: THE MIDDLE EAST -- I DON'T KNOW IF IT FIGURED IN YOUR TALKS -- DID YOU NOTICE ANY CHANGE IN THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION FROM WHAT IT HAS BEEN BEFORE?

CHRISTOPHER: WE DID EXCHANGE VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. THE PRINCIPAL DISCUSSION ON THAT SUBJECT WAS MY RECOUNTING OF THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES RELATING TO THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND TO INDICATE THAT SECRETARY VANCE INTENDS TO GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST EARLY IN AUGUST TO PURSUE THE POSSIBILITIES OF PEACE IN THAT AREA. I DID NOT PERCEIVE ANY CHANGE ON THE PART OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT I DID FIND IN THEIR COMMENTS A DESIRE THAT WE SHARE -- TO TRY TO FIND A BASIS FOR ACHIEVING PEACE IN THAT AREA WHERE CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN TENSE FOR SUCH A LONG TIME.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.
GOHEEN

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